SOFTWARE & TECH

Da 4187 Compassionate Reassignment Example

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Understanding the DA 4187 and the Compassionate Reassignment Process

Serving in the United States Army demands immense dedication, sacrifice, and resilience. Soldiers and their families often face unique challenges that can be exacerbated by geographic separation from critical support networks. When unforeseen and severe personal hardships arise, the Army provides a formal mechanism to request a change in duty station to alleviate these burdens. This process is initiated through a specific personnel action form: the DA Form 4187. Understanding how to navigate this process is crucial for soldiers facing difficult circumstances. This comprehensive guide will explore what a DA 4187 Compassionate Reassignment Example looks like in practice, breaking down the form, the required documentation, the approval criteria, and the step-by-step procedure to help soldiers build a compelling case for relief.

A compassionate reassignment is not a routine request. It is a deliberate administrative action designed to address extraordinary and verifiable family problems that cannot be resolved through other means, such as local community resources, family support groups, or short-term leave. The foundation of every successful compassionate reassignment application is a meticulously completed DA 4187, supported by irrefutable evidence. By examining a detailed example, soldiers can better understand the language, structure, and level of detail required to effectively communicate their hardship to the chain of command and the approving authority. This article will serve as a practical roadmap, transforming a complex bureaucratic procedure into a clear and achievable objective for those who genuinely need it.

What is DA Form 4187?

DA Form 4187, officially titled "Personnel Action," is a versatile document used for a wide array of administrative actions within the Army. From correcting administrative errors to requesting schooling, reclassification, or reassignment, this single form serves as the primary vehicle for initiating changes to a soldier's personnel records. For the purpose of a compassionate reassignment, the DA 4187 acts as the formal request letter that articulates the soldier's hardship and the specific action being requested. It is not the supporting documentation itself, but the cover document that summarizes the case and initiates the official process.

The form is standardized, with specific blocks for the soldier's personal information, the type of action requested (in this case, a reassignment), the reason for the request, and the recommendations from the chain of command. A well-written DA 4187 for a compassionate reassignment must be concise yet comprehensive. It needs to clearly state the nature of the family problem, explain why a reassignment to a specific location is the necessary solution, and briefly summarize the supporting evidence that is being attached. The form is then routed through the soldier's immediate supervisor, battalion commander, brigade commander, and ultimately to the Human Resources Command (HRC) or the appropriate approving authority, depending on the specific circumstances and the soldier's component (Active Army, Reserve, or National Guard).

Defining a Compassionate Reassignment

Before diving into the example, it is essential to understand what officially constitutes a valid reason for a compassionate reassignment. The Army defines a compassionate reassignment as a transfer authorized for a

soldier who is experiencing a severe family problem that requires the soldier's physical presence to assist. The key word here is **severe**. The problem must be of such magnitude that it would be unreasonable to expect the soldier to continue to perform their duties effectively while being geographically separated from their family.

Commonly accepted reasons include:

- Critical Medical Conditions: A spouse, child, or dependent parent diagnosed with a terminal illness, a severe injury requiring long-term care, or a debilitating condition that necessitates the soldier's daily assistance for medical appointments, physical therapy, or end-of-life care.
- Death of a Family Member: The death of a spouse, child, or dependent parent which leaves surviving family members in a state of crisis. This often involves the need for the soldier to manage estate affairs, provide emotional support to surviving children, or assume the role of primary caregiver for other dependents.
- Severe Financial or Legal Hardship: A verified situation where the family's financial stability is in immediate jeopardy, or a legal crisis (such as custody battles or elder abuse situations) requires the soldier's regular physical presence to resolve. This is a more difficult justification and requires substantial, verifiable proof.
- Unique Family Circumstances: Cases involving a single parent with dependents who have complex needs, or situations where the soldier is the sole surviving family member capable of managing a significant family crisis.

It is critical to note that temporary difficulties, minor medical conditions, or a simple desire to be closer to family do not qualify. The burden of proof rests squarely on the soldier to demonstrate that the hardship is exceptional and that no other solution is viable. The potential receiving unit must also be willing and able to accept the soldier, and the soldier must possess a valid skill that the gaining unit needs, or be assigned to a position that can accommodate their MOS (Military Occupational Specialty).

Anatomy of a DA 4187 Compassionate Reassignment Example

Let's construct a realistic example to illustrate how a soldier would fill out the DA 4187. This example will focus on a common scenario: a soldier whose spouse has been diagnosed with a severe, debilitating illness requiring constant care.

Scenario: Sergeant (SGT) Jane Doe is an Active Duty 42A (Human Resources Specialist) stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. Her husband, John Doe, has been diagnosed with Stage IV pancreatic cancer and is undergoing aggressive chemotherapy at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. Their two young children are struggling emotionally, and John requires daily assistance with meals, transportation, and medication management. SGT Doe is requesting a compassionate reassignment to Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, which is a 90-minute drive from the Mayo Clinic and the family's current home. The receiving unit at Fort McCoy has a vacant 42A billet.

Section I: Identification Data

This section is straightforward. SGT Doe would fill in her full name, SSN (or DoD ID number), rank, date of rank, UIC (Unit Identification Code), and current unit of assignment (e.g., HHC, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX).

Section II: Action Requested

This is the most critical part. SGT Doe would clearly write: **"REQUEST COMPASSIONATE REASSIGNMENT. SOLDIER REQUESTS PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION (PCS) TO FORT MCCOY, WISCONSIN, DUE TO A CRITICAL FAMILY MEDICAL CRISIS."**It is vital to be explicit. Simply writing "Compassionate Reassignment" is insufficient. The action must be tied to the specific hardship and the preferred gaining location.

Section III: Remarks (The Narrative)

Block 18, "Remarks," is where the soldier provides the core justification. This is the heart of the DA 4187 Compassionate Reassignment Example. It must be a well-organized, factual, and compelling narrative. Here is how SGT Doe might complete this block:

"SGT Jane Doe requests a compassionate reassignment to Fort McCoy, WI, under the provisions of AR 614-200, Chapter 3. The soldier is experiencing a severe family hardship due to the critical medical condition of her spouse, Mr. John Doe. On 15 March 2024, Mr. Doe was diagnosed with Stage IV pancreatic adenocarcinoma and is currently undergoing intensive chemotherapy and radiation treatment at the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN. His prognosis is guarded, and he requires daily, extensive care including assistance with mobility, administration of medication, transportation to medical appointments, and management of severe side effects of treatment. The soldier's two minor children, ages 4 and 7, are also experiencing significant emotional distress and require the presence of both parents during this difficult time. The family resides in Rochester, MN, and the soldier is currently geographically separated by a distance of approximately 1,000 miles. The soldier's unit at Fort Hood has utilized local resources, including Army Community Service (ACS) and the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP), but these resources cannot provide the 24/7, in-home care that the situation demands. A compassionate reassignment to Fort McCoy, WI, which is located 90 miles from the family's residence, would reduce the soldiers commute and allow her to balance her professional duties with the critical, non-deferrable care needs of her spouse and children. The soldier's MOS (42A) is available at Fort McCoy, and the gaining unit has been contacted and is willing to accept her upon approval. Attached is a memorandum from Mr. Doe's oncologist detailing the diagnosis, treatment plan, and estimated duration of care requirements, as well as a letter from the family's primary care physician attesting to the overall family crisis. A DA 31 (Leave Request) for emergency leave is attached for the period of 20-30 March 2024 which the soldier used to attend initial medical consultations."

Notice the key elements in this narrative:

- Specifics: It names the illness, the hospital, and the specific care needs.
- Severity: It uses language like "diagnosed with Stage IV," "guarded prognosis," "intensive chemotherapy," and "extensive care" to convey the gravity of the situation.
- Proximity & Logic: It clearly explains why the receiving location (Fort McCoy) is the right solution (90-minute drive to the Mayo Clinic).
- Exhausted Other Options: It mentions ACS and EFMP to show the soldier tried other avenues first.
- Military Necessity: It states that the MOS is available and the gaining unit is willing to accept the soldier, which addresses the needs of the Army.
- Evidence Referenced: It specifically lists the supporting documents that are attached, making the case easy for reviewers to verify.

Required Supporting Documentation for the Example

An approved DA 4187 is only as strong as the evidence that backs it up. In this compassionate reassignment example, several key documents would be attached to the form:

1. Medical Documentation: A detailed, signed letter from Mr. Doe's oncologist on hospital letterhead. This letter should clearly state the diagnosis, the stage of the disease, the treatment plan (including an estimated duration of chemotherapy), the anticipated side effects, and the specific need for a live-in caregiver to manage daily activities and symptoms. This is the most critical piece of evidence.
2. Primary Care Physician Letter: A letter from the family's primary care doctor addressing the overall impact on

the family unit, including the emotional and psychological needs of the children.

3. Copies of Medical Records: Relevant pages from the patient's medical file, such as diagnostic imaging reports, pathology reports, and treatment schedules. This provides primary source verification of the doctor's letter.

4. Soldier's Memorandum: While the DA 4187 contains the narrative, a separate, more detailed memorandum from the soldier to the approving authority can provide additional context. This memo can explain the family's living situation, the children's school arrangements, and the specific logistical challenges of commuting from Fort McCoy to the Mayo Clinic.

5. Memorandum of Support from the Gaining Unit: A signed memorandum from the commander or S-1 (Personnel Officer) of the gaining unit at Fort McCoy, confirming that they have a valid 42A vacancy and are willing to accept SGT Doe during the current fiscal year. This proves that the reassignment will not create a manning problem for the Army.

6. Emergency Leave Request (DA 31): If the soldier has already used emergency leave to deal with the crisis, including a copy of the approved DA 31 demonstrates that the situation is current and ongoing.

7. Financial Documentation (If Applicable): In some cases, showing that the family's health insurance is tied to a local employer, or that the soldier's financial assistance is the sole source of income, can strengthen the case.

The Role of the Chain of Command

Once SGT Doe submits her DA 4187, it begins its journey through her chain of command. Each leader—from her platoon sergeant to her battalion commander—will review the request and

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